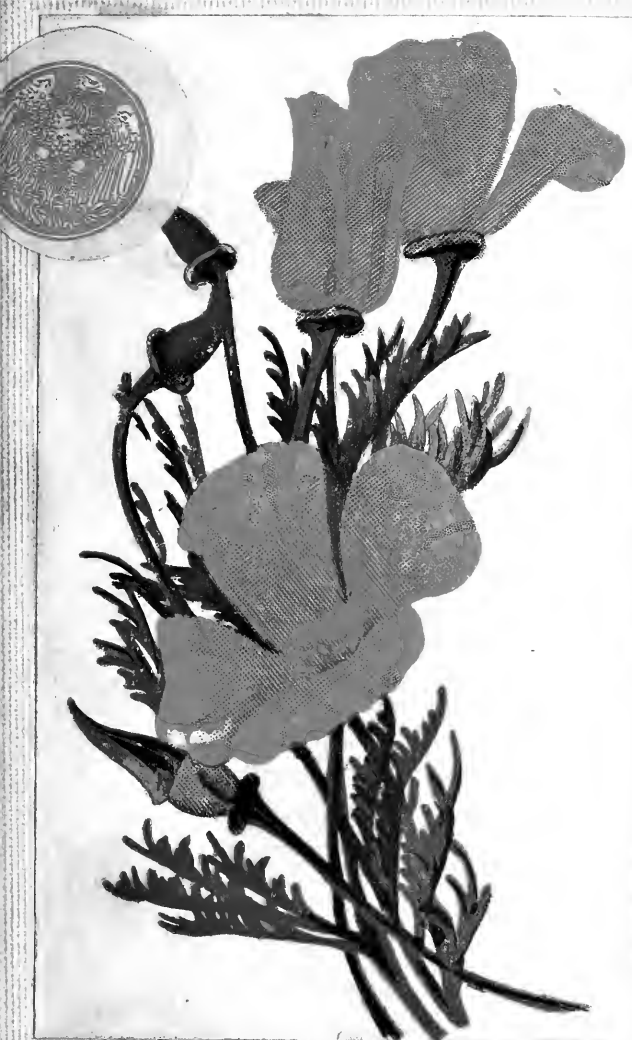




A
Bunch
of
Poppies

Mary Adams Jameson

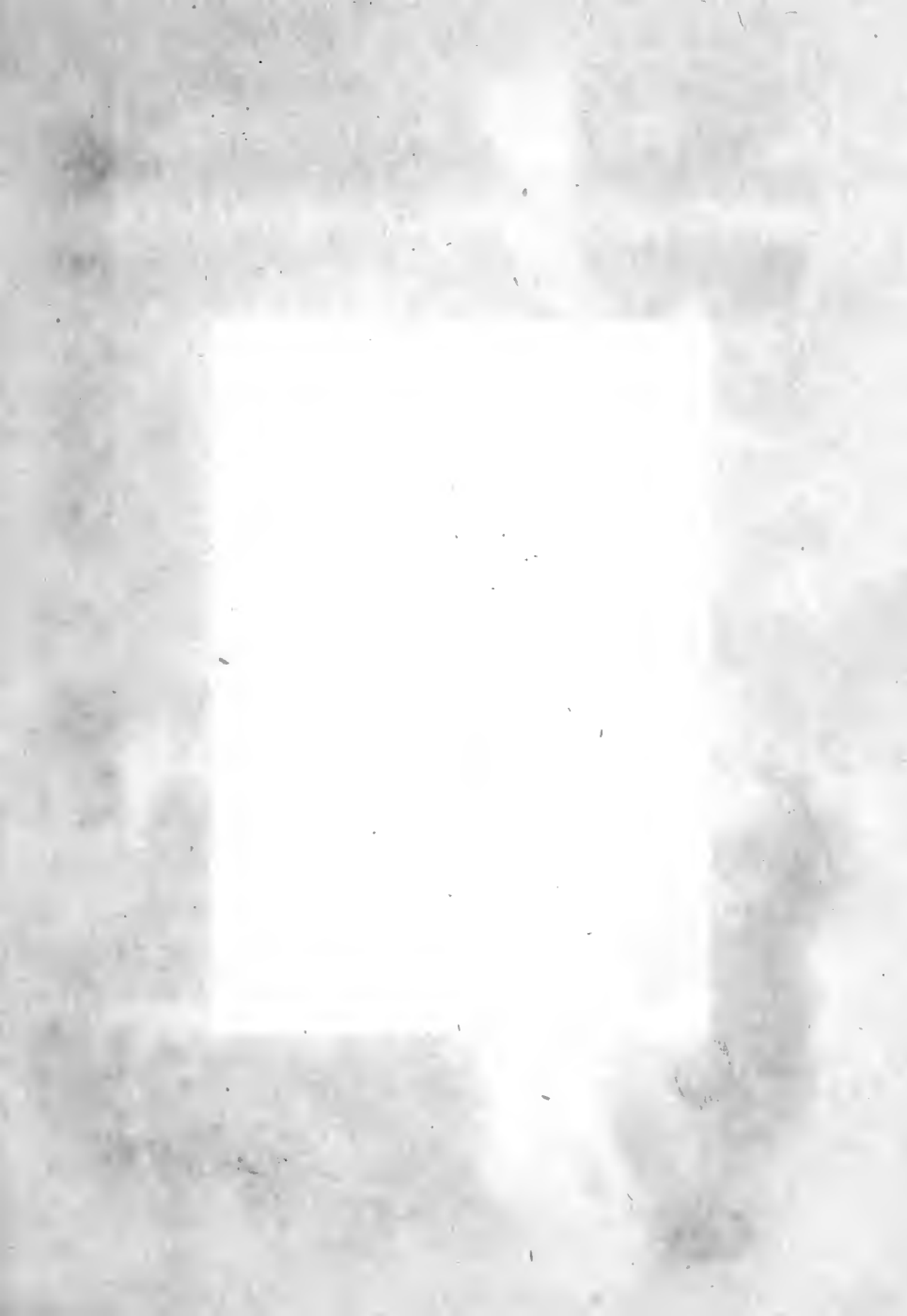


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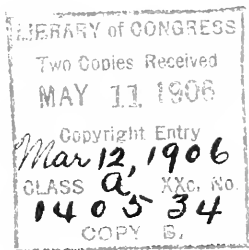
A Bunch of Poppies

MARY ADAMS JAMESON



CINCINNATI
PRESS OF JENNINGS AND GRAHAM

1906



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1906

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BY
MARY ADAMS JAMESON

copy of

To

Harrison Moore Jameson

To

whose fine sympathy and loving devotion
this book is mainly due



The Winding Stair.

OWN a winding stair
None but I can see,
One, with golden hair,
Cometh noiselessly—
Comes and sits with me.

And her eyes are blue
As the summer skies;
And within them new
Heavenly rapture lies,
And a glad surprise.

I can only gaze
At the vision sweet,
In a rapt amaze;
But her smile, replete
With a love complete,

Folds me in its splendor;
While the room is filled
With a radiance tender,
And my pulse is stilled—
And my being thrilled.

Then she talks with me
In the old, sweet way;
Soothes and counsels me,
How I may not say—
Now nor any day.

All my heart a-throb,
Pulses quiv'ring, too;
Cry I with a sob—
"Mother! Is it *you*?
Mother! Tell me true."

.

Up the winding stair,
Through the dome of blue,
She with golden hair—
She, my vision true,
Floateth from my view.

Bessie and I.



YOU Moon! *Have you got any God in the sky?*

That we should be scorned by passers-by,

And left in the street to starve and die—

Bessie and I?

We've been thrust away from many a door,
And we only asked the alms of the poor,
A crust of bread and a bed on the floor—

Bessie and I.

We're hungry and tired, and sore are our feet,
From treading so long up and down the street,
Through the blinding storm of snow and sleet—

Bessie and I.

I guess I'll make us a bed in the snow,
For Sissy's so tired, and then you must know
In all this city we've nowhere to go—

Bessie and I.

We'd go to Heaven, if it wasn't so high,
But maybe the angels will come, by-and-by,
And carry us up to the bright, blue sky—

Bessie and I?

Life's Sacrament.

DEAR Love! I'm sitting very humble in
my place,
So very humble, because loving so ;
And Love's contentment lies upon my
face,
And folds about my heart its summer glow.

Since once you folded down, in other days,
Upon my mouth Love's holy eucharist,
Dear, all my heart is bare unto thy gaze,
As thine to me is clear and passion-kissed.

I crave no higher meed of fame than this ;—
"She holds his heart with modest, wifely
grace,
Her sceptre falls as softly as a kiss ;
She makes her home her husband's resting-
place."

'Tis sweeter than men's praise, this wifely
crown,

Thus placed on my young head by such as
thou ;

Upon whose soul God's truth is folded down,
Like fruitage on an Autumn-laden bough

Henceforth we two, whose souls have newly
kissed,

Will stand up high above the social-wrongs,
That warp the truth and mar love's eucharist;—

The world is sad that should be full of
songs.

We will not wander in its dusty lanes,

But walk where souls grow purer day by
day,

Outside the gates of worldly lusts and gains,
Along a better and more sacred way.

We will not clasp hands with creeds that lead
astray,

But take the *Word* and do the best we
know;

As there's one God, so there is one true way;
We 'll seek for that, and let the others go.

And thus our lives, love-scented, sweet as
musk,

Shall glide as glad as any meadow-brook
Slips silver-footed through the fretted dusk,
Though Sinai's thunder all our heaven shook.

And so, dear heart, our love will ever grow
Till rosy morn shall wax to cloudless noon,
And noon shall wane to evening's hallowed
glow,

And night shall gather round our lives o'er-
soon.

No Vacant Chairs.



HERE are, methinks, no vacant chairs.

The air is full of whirring wings,
And vibrant songs that nobody sings,
And footfalls on the creaking stairs.

So like and yet unlike the lost
They come and go. With earthly ear
Their spirit-feet you may not hear,
But only feel a touch of frost

Blow past you through the open door;
And could your earthly eyes but see
Their forms the vacant chairs would be
Still occupying as of yore.

Crazy Jane.



DAPPLED sky hangs overhead,
And golden lies the air;
The maples flame a russet-red,
With scarlet here and there,
And fling their pools of shadows wide
Along the grain field's yellow tide.

Adown the lane, with flying feet
And wild, disheveled hair,
And in her eyes, once calm and sweet,
A panting, dumb despair,
Flees Crazy Jane, her pallid face
Bereft of all its olden grace.

What cares she for a dappled sky—
The maple's flaming red?
She only hears a wailing cry
And sees an empty bed;
She only knows that food was high,
And then—and then some passers-by—

She never knew the story well,
A madness clutched her brain;
She only knows what some folks tell,
And croons it o'er again;
Then dashes madly down the lane
To find her baby—"Bonnie Jean."

The children taunt her as they pass,
And, laughing, clutch her gown;
She flings them curses on the grass
With ugly baleful frown—
She tears it loose with might and main,
And speeds her on her way again.

.
Across the meadows, dewy sweet,
With slow and halting tread;
The daisies crushed beneath her feet,
No longer fancy led,
Comes sorrow-laden Crazy Jane,
And creepeth homeward up the lane.

When Baby Leaves the House.

LIFT it up from its satin bed,
Only a curl of gold;
But I see again the burnished head
We've missed a year from the fold.

We had a year and a day to love her,
Nor thought we should be bereft;
The daisies blossom and lean above her—
Only a curl is left.

Sometimes I reach through the dark and grope
In the crib beside my bed;
There's nothing there but an empty hope—
Our little ewe-lamb has fled.

They say she lives up there in the skies—
Ah, God! We know that is so;
But we miss—we miss the blue of her eyes—
The mouth that was like a bow.

The heart must ache and the tears must fall—
(The rooms are still as a mouse—)
For joy goes out with the funeral pall,
when baby leaves the house.

On the Border.

Y hair is turning gray, love,
White threads among the brown;
The neighbors used to say, love,
No other lass in town
Had such a glory-crown.

How many years have flown, love,
Since you and I were wed?
How many tears we've sown, love,
Upon the daisied bed,
Where lie our treasured dead!

Our hearts can ne'er forget, love,
The graves, they number five;
I think I see them yet, love—
Our bonny, merry five—
The room is all alive.

They beckon me away, love,
Their faces stoop to me;
But I would rather stay, love,
With you, if it could be,
Till both should go, you see.

My eyes are growing dim, love.
Your face I can not see;
And One, that's like to Him, love,
Is standing close by me—
His gleaming robe I see.

Across the shining sea, love—
(Our God, He knoweth best
What's best for you and me, love—)
I'll wait you with the rest,
For God, He—knoweth—best.

My King.

HE looked at me so gravely sweet,
My sinful self stood bare;
My eyes slow lifted His to meet—
When lo! beyond compare
His love shone everywhere.

I looked about me for my sin,
His hand had covered it;
My timid faith crept up and in—
His Great Heart hovered it—
His love, too, suffered it.

And since my faith has older grown,
It's anchored fast and tight.
And now I see all thickly sown
With stars the blackest night—
Beyond the red dawn's light.

O, Christ! My King! Steadfast keep me,
As Thou didst those of old
Whom God gave Thee—till I shall see
Thy glory light the streets of gold,
Life's story done and told.

Mustered Out.

DOWN in the woods we found him,
Where he had fought and fell—
Just as the death-chill bound him
Fast with its icy spell.

Down where the guns had thundered,
Belching their hail of wrath,
Piling the dead unnumbered
Right in the battle's path.

Down in the fragrant grasses,
Where were the faces of men
Turned to the sky in masses—
Faces of dead men then.

Shot to death in the forehead—
Here's where the ball went in,
Leaving the face unmarréd,
Glancing out at the chin.

God! and here is another
Ghastly wound in the chest;
Was there a comrade brother
To catch his last bequest!

Brownest of boyish faces—
Browned with the wind and rain;
Sweet were the lips whose graces
Curved with a touch of pain.

Death was his badge of renown,
Smooth was his face as a girl's;
Only a showing of down
Taking the hue of the curls

Over the wan brow clustered.
Youngest of freedom's sons!
Grandly here was he mustered
Out by the mouths of the guns.

'Twixt Her and Me.



E stood knee-deep in poppy beds,
A tiny beck between;
The blue sky hung above our heads—
One light—one darker sheen.

And all the world, so fair and wide,
Seemed made for us—none else beside.

I wove a chaplet for her hair—
A golden poppy-crown;
She gaily tossed it in the air,
And smiled to see my frown.
Her tawny tresses, finely spun,
Shone red like copper in the sun.

"Nay, nay! The yellow crown," I said
With eager, ardent speech,
"Just suits, dear love, your bonny head
And skin like down of peach."
At which the brown eyes droopéd low,
And crimson dyed her brow of snow.

.

Our happy laughter tore in shreds,
The beck so wide had grown;
With faces pallid as the dead's
On either brink we stood alone;
We eager leaned and tried to reach
Across the flood with gasping speech.

We raced the waters heel and heel—
The flood grew wider—wider;
Appalled, I saw her sudden reel—
The poppy-crown beside her;
I heard a raven's far, hoarse cry,
And ashen clouds went skurrying by.

I caught, beyond the maddening swirl,
Her face turned backward to me—
A waving hand—a tawny curl,
That sent the wild blood through me;
Then wide as death 'twixt her and me
Gray mist inwrapped a grayer sea.

Old Letters.

TAKE them up here one by one
And read them calmly through;
Some foolish things were said and done
By me as well as you.

We'll let them pass. We've older grown,
And wiser, too, I ween;
We plucked the flower fully-blown,
And not the bud between.

We walked apart long years ago,
Our paths have never met;
We were content to have it so;
We will not now regret.

We each have ties more sacred grown
Than any formed of yore;
And with the flower fully blown
Have children at our door.

And so I burn them one by one,
These letters tied with blue—
The foolish things once said and done
By me as well as you.

Sweetheart.



THE world's been never the same, sweetheart!

Never the same,

Since they tucked you away in your coffin-bed,

With a snowy shaft piled high at your head,
Carved with your name.

My life's been leaden and gray, sweetheart!

Leaden and gray,

Since your spirit-boat went sailing through
The gleaming skies in a rift of blue,
One bitter day.

My hair is sifted with snow, sweetheart!

Sifted with snow;

For the years have pelted me hard—and you—
I'm glad you are safe in that harbor true,
And could not know.

Sometimes I'm seeing your face, sweetheart!
Set in the sky;
You are drawing me up to the rift of blue,
And all my heart is there with you—
Aye, and for aye.

Baby-Boo.



YOUNG moon swings asleep in the
skies,

Baby-boo!

The poppies are blinking and shutting
their eyes—

Why haven't you?

The lambs are cuddled warm in their bed,

Baby-boo!

They're tired of play, and their prayers are
said—

How about you?

The firefly glows and the cricket sings,

Baby-boo!

The birds have their heads tucked under their
wings—

So ought you.

The sandman's coming. Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho!

Baby-boo!

Be still as a mouse, dear. Don't you know

He's after you?

The sandman has come. Your lids drop down.

Baby-boo!

He'll carry you away to Shut-eye Town—

Good-bye to you!

The Missel Thrush.



SONGSTER of the English Woods!

O lover of the mistletoe!

It is thy dauntless spirit, bird,

That charms and thrills us so.

When all thy woods are thunder-riven;

And storm-clouds sweep the sky;

The louder—clearer—richer—sweeter,

Thy song mounts up on high.

Lord God! Give me such spirit-wings,

When Sinai's thunders roll,

That I may brush the upper heights

With song-bliss in my soul.

The Seedtime of Love.

DOWN in the meadow a bobolink's swing-
ing,
The tall grass swayeth and bendeth
quite over;

Only a minute he leaves off his singing,
To pick out the heart of a red-eyed clover.

Robins are wantoning—doves are a-cooing;
A bluejay is calling his mate in a tree;
Softly she croons to her own undoing—
A daring and ardent lover is he.

Cuckoo buds gleam in the meadow grasses,
The cuckoo is leaning from copse and brake;
Dippeth the swallow low as he passes—
A long, forkéd shadow glides in his wake.

Out in the orchard the fruit buds are swelling,
The thorn-tree is white with its drifted snow;
Donald and Dolly, the old story telling,
Lean each to each in the garden below.

Saucy and thievish—a greedy getter,
The jackdaw croaks on the wall above;
What does it matter? He knows no better;
The coming of spring is the seedtime of love.

My Angels.

BUT from the blue of the sky
Two angels are looking at me;
Their place is so far and high,
No other their faces can see—
No other—save only me.

The one has the pale-gold hair,
The other is darker than she;
But both are so heavenly fair;
I know them as well as can be—
My angels—and they know me.

Out from the blue of the sky
My angels are coming to me;
The heavens no longer are high—
But closer—ah! close as can be
I hug the dear one at my knee.

As fair as the lily is she;
Her face wears a hushed surprise,
And ever she runs to my knee—
A questioning look in her eyes—
To ask what they do in the skies.

.

A touch like the frost of night,
An icy wind sweeps by!
A flash of luminous white—
And now three angels have I
Instead of two in the sky.

“Teddy.”

(AS GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.)



OD fashioned a man after His own
plan,

With the soul of the East and the
heart of the West;

With sinews of steel to throttle the wrong—
To pinion the Beast with stanchion and thong.
A man for the need. Comprehend if you can
The people have wrongs that must be re-
dressed.

He stepped from his Maker's open palm
Full-girded and armed for the righteous
fray ;
His blows fell as hot as the breath of hell—

The Beast showed his teeth, snarled, up-rose
and fell
Before the white-heat of omnipotent calm;
And "Teddy"—the fighter—had won the
day.

Tired Out.

HE red dawn creepeth up the East,
As I to Thee;
The night was long and chill and dark—
I could not see.

Nor moon nor star lit up the sky—
Lord God! Lord God! Thou heardst my cry.

The red sun droppeth in the west—

Ah, me! Ah, me!

Tired out as any child at play,

This heart of me.

Too tired—too tired to even weep—

Lord God! Lord God! Wilt give me sleep?

Little Dear.



HAT are you thinking of, little dear?—

You look so wise and pucker your brow

Into a wrinkle so funny and queer.

What are you thinking of anyhow?

Clutching the sunbeams with soft, pink fists,

Talking a language that nobody knows;

Winning your way like a knight in the lists—

Wearing your favors of dimple and rose.

Dropping white lids o'er your blue-bell eyes

You sleep with never a thought of fear,

While the angels lean from the bending skies—

What do they tell in your shell-like ear?

We may never know, little dear, little dear!

Though you try to tell in your own sweet
way ;

For you speak a language so funny and queer,
We could never learn it forever and a day.

Helen.

BLITHELY sang the meadow-lark.
The sky was so blue;
'Twixt the rifts of light and dark
Swallows sailed through;
Gay the crowds within the park.
None gayer than you,
Helen! Helen!

All the air with laughter shook
That summery weather;
None did see the way you took,
Alone, with no other;
Stealing swift as limpid brook
Between banks of heather,
Helen! Helen!

By the lake a hat and coat—
The sky was so blue—
Further on a drifting boat
Without any crew,
Oars and something white afloat,
That proved to be you,
Helen! Helen!

White and still your placid face
Upturned to the dew;
Coils of hair, swept out of place,
Your calm eyes shone through.
Dumb with death's majestic grace,
Is it well with you?
Helen! Helen!

The Parting of the Ways.



THE sweetness that lies in your beautiful eyes,

Nanette!

They're as blue as the blue of the summer skies,

And with always a hint of a June sun-rise,
Nanette!

O the glory you wear in your red-gold hair,
Nanette!

Just a shimmer of gloss—just a golden glare,
With glintings of flame through it here and there.

Nanette!

O the bloom of the south's on your red-
curved mouth,

Nanette!

Such abandon of color the north disalloweth,
As the pomegranate, sliced through the mid-
dle, avoweth,

Nanette!

O the ache in my heart since our ways must
part,

Nanette!

It is better perhaps for us both. But the
smart

That is mine, is too deep for the tears to start,
Nanette!

How It Happened.



HE was a dainty creature
As ever you did see,
Her cheeks were like the peach-
blow,

Eyes blue as blue could be;
Her hair like rippling sunshine
Fell almost to her knee.

I have not done her justice,
No artist could do that;
Depict the sweet, shy coyness
Beneath the rakish hat—
The tantalizing dimples
He never could get at.

They played in wild abandon,
They nestled in the chin,
And in among the peach-blow
A-creeping out and in,
Till all my heart was aching
To kiss where they had been.

We sat upon the door-step,
The moon was hanging low,
The stars were leaning toward us,
And all the world below
Was still as parting lovers—
Seemed in a fervid glow.

Now what transpired, I'm certain
I never could make clear,
But this—I felt a stinging
Sharp blow upon my ear—
She left me on the door-step
With thoughts you shall not hear.

But that is how it happened—
[And you will all agree—]
That cruising after dimples
I said was not for me,
And so I took to Blackstone,
And let the maidens be.

The Secret.



LINNET, linnet! Stop singing a minute;
You heard what my true love said.
Now tell me true for the love of you,
Will he love me when I'm dead?

O linnet, linnet! 'Sh! Softly begin it.
The secret is yours and mine;
You know it's the way, forever and a day,
The true-lover's knot is the sign.

O linnet, parbleu! I'm ashamed of you.
Go back and hide your head!
My lover'll be true in spite of you—
He'll *not* love another instead.

Grant.



WORD was flashed across the sea,

“Hasten!

For one you love most tenderly
Is languishing your face to see.”

The nation's hero was dying.

Word was messaged back again,

“Coming!

Your Nellie rides the heaving main.”

The sick man rallied once again,

And the days—the days were flying.

Nellie's step was on the stair.

Shaking,

He started from his lounging chair,

And then—a flash of bonny hair—

“My little ewe-lamb!” he cried.

Dead the nation's hero is.

Silence!—

Nor falling tear, nor loving kiss,
Nor world-wide praises such as his,
Can reach the other side.

Our Mother.

I SAY it softly as I weep,
And kiss the cold, hard stone;
She lies here but a fathom deep,
And I sit here alone.

She had not lost her girlish grace,
Yet wore the woman's crown,
And now the long grass marks the place
Of her they've coffined down.

I press my cheek down close to where
White daisy-cups are seen,
And wish a bed some cubits square,
With coverlet of green;
A spacious bed, grass-roofed o'erhead,
And wide enough for two,
Where she and I, though we are dead,
May love the long years through.

I reach out pleading hands, and fold
My arms about the stone;
I'd rather be here still and cold—
The way's so dark and lone.
I call her, but she does not hear,
Nor speak a word, I ween;
I shudder with a sudden fear—
The grave-dark lies between.

My heart will sob aloud and moan
From out its darkening shiver;
My life has caught the minor tone,
And moans on like a river
That seeks in vain the far-off sea.
I gather up my woe
And totter homeward o'er the lea,
That smiles in bloom below.

Fast Asleep.



AXEN eyelids, folded down,
Fringed with lashes golden-brown.

Both the hands in careless grace
Flung above the dreamfull face.

Hair of gloss, a-flecked across,
Like the checkered threads of moss

Blown upon by Western seas—
Tumbled downward to the knees.

From the eyelids folded down,
Fringed with lashes golden-brown,

Dewy lusters spilling over
Like the rain on honey clover.

What has happened now, I wonder,
So to shake her dreams with thunder?

In the red lips' curves, half-hidden,
Lurks a sob like guest unbidden.

And a shadow, faint and dim
As a cloudlet's outer rim,

Drops from some place far or near
On the sleeper lying here;

Leaps and laps the face across
Like the lights on trailing moss.

See! the sleeper, feeling these,
Rolls like boat on rocking seas—

Rolls and moans as if in pain,
With a dash of summer rain.

Little sleeper! folded warm
From the sight and touch of harm,

What has happened now, I wonder,
So to shake your dreams with thunder?

De Profundis.



WE wade knee-deep in mire and dirt;
We stand as dwarfs amid the light,
When to the mountain's dizzy height
Our souls should leap with feet alert.

Through sweat and blood we reach the stairs
That lead to God, whose flaming bars
Mark out a road of golden stars
'Neath bluer skies, through purer airs.

From lowest depths of earthly woe,
We grow from men to gods instead;
We breathe new life who once were dead,
We soar above the herd below.

From out the soul of darkest night
The fairest morning creeps full-blown;
As Pallas sprang full-armed, full-grown,
From head of Jove with torch of light.

I hold this truth through all of life,
To be a cure for human sorrow;
That each to-day forbodes a morrow,
That peace is ever born of strife;

That deepest grief brings surest calm,
And saddest hearts a healthy bloom
Of rarer fruit from out the tomb;
For every wound God gives a balm.

The crowns we wear are won by toil;
The purest lives grow white and still
Through goad, despair, and sternest ill,
Since man's first curse to till the soil.

God holds the two extremes of time:
With His own hand He marks the way
Our feet shall tread from day to day,
From dearth and death to purer clime.

Pearl.

(AGED EIGHTEEN MONTHS)



UT one silken, golden tress
From the curl-tossed head, Annesse—
Lock it up with mute caress

From my sight. I can not bear
Yet to touch those threads of hair,
Fine as silk and amber-fair.

Put the broidered robe aside;
Nevermore with boastful pride
I shall let the needles glide;—

Nevermore across the floor,
At the swinging, open door,
I shall see her as of yore.

Put the little shoes away,
And the toys she used in play,
Ah, sweet Christ! but yesterday—

Stop a moment! As they said,
Do you think her truly dead,
Only two hours ill in bed?—

Icy-cold you say she is?—
She was never used to this—
Nothing colder than a kiss.

Fold the dimpled hands. This way
She was wont to kneel and pray
“Now I lay me” every day.

In her crib you say she's lain?
Ah, within this clutching pain!
And without the sobbing rain!

Wrap her warm, and Annesse, stay!
She must not be lain away
Till a brighter, fairer day.

Could I sleep of nights and know
That the rain and drifting snow
Beat about her cradle so?

God! The house! How still it is!
The worst Babel would be bliss
To a stillness such as this.

If I Had Known.

IF I had known the way would be so clear
Unto my feet,
I had not kept in byways bleak and drear,
With thorns replete.

If I had known *His* mansion was so fair
And full of joy,
I had not staid where Satan set his snare,
In *sin's* employ.

If I had known His table would be spread
For even *me*,
That, freed of sin, all would be housed and fed
In like degree—

I had not waited all these years to cry,
 My Saviour sweet:
I had been glad to only prostrate lie
 And kiss His feet,
Content that He should give to such as *I*
 Such *bliss* complete.

Kate's Slipper.

IT has stood upon my dressing-case
A score of years and more,
Yet is as dainty on its face
As when *she*, with a nameless grace,
Tripped o'er the polished floor.

I lift it up as one who hears
A voice that stabs him through;
I dust it softly through my tears,
And pray the grief-dust from those years
Might drop as quickly, too.

And sudden all the deadened air
Is strangely stirred around me,
A rustle on the empty stair—
A foot-fall close beside my chair,
Bewilder and astound me.

Then cool through all the fever pain
I feel upon my brow
Her kisses fall like Autumn rain,
And her soft cheek to mine is lain—
No softer then than now.

Of old I reached out passionate,
The vision was so like her,
And groped, and cursed irrationate,
God's hand whose skill could fashion it—
The arrow that should strike her.

But now I've grown so used, I'm still,
Though like as life it seems;
I know, as oft before, it will
But leave me yet in deeper chill,
Since only made of dreams. . . .

“Not Now, But Afterward.”

GOD knows the paths that you must tread;
The sunlit way with scent of rose,
Of eglantine and rosemary, too,
When life is sweet with honey-dew,
The sky so blue—so blue o’erhead.

You wade through fields of yellow-aster,
And sing as blithe as woodland bird;
You crush the cowslips over and over
To reach some phantom four-leaf clover,
That lures you onward faster—faster.

.

Alack! What’s this? The rose is dead.
The eglantine a scentless thing;
And where’s the sky so blue—so blue?
A gray, cold mist, that chills you through,
Shuts out the sky—hangs overhead.

Your moan slips shuddering through your
mouth,

Your tears are frozen ere they fall;
You grope and clutch the empty air;
You seem so old you know not where
You parted comp'ny with your youth.

You totter panting, sorrow-eyed,
Along the crocus-bordered road,
With yew and cypress overhung.
"Alack!" you moan, "My songs are sung,
And life is lived, since love has died."

Above your cry His voice is heard.
You hear it not, you only know
Your skies to-day are cold and gray
That were so blue but yesterday—
"Not now, my child! but afterward.

If roads are rough, and skies are blurred,
But trust my love that knoweth best;
If skies are gray that once were blue,
The gray, my child! is best for you.
Not now, you'll know, but afterward."

Margaret.



MARGARET! Margaret! You are
fair, you are proud,
You have queenly ways and a queenly
tread;

You are singled out in any crowd
By the stately poise of your golden head.

Margaret! Margaret! You are false as you're
fair;

You are white as the snow and far more cold;
And the amber lights of your lustrous hair
Are banded away in a heavy fold.

Margaret! Margaret! You were late at the ball
In a satin dress of the finest woof;
And the richest lace was over it all—
I craved a word, but you kept aloof.

Margaret! Margaret! And there blazed in
the lights,

A fiery gleam on your snowy hand,
Like clusters of stars on summer nights—
The ring I gave was a plain, gold band.

Margaret! Margaret! In that golden summer
We played at hearts, and the days were aflame,
And our speech died out in a blissful murmur
As we drew on near to the end of the game.

Margaret! Margaret! And I held you so fast,
As I kissed your lips in a passionate swoon,
That heart beat to heart in a rapture, at last,
And the stars heard our troth-vows under
the moon.

Margaret! Margaret! You are cruel as death,
And the haughty gleam of your violet eyes
Is fatal as steel when it cleaves the breath
Of a man in the fight till he dies.

Margaret! Margaret! The sea-gull is crying,
And the sun of the South Sea's pale in the
west;

And troops of ominous birds are flying
About the ship on the ocean's breast.

Margaret! Margaret! The daylight is dying
From out of the sky and off from the sea,
And the low south winds are sighing—sighing,
And I am roaming an exile for thee.

The Weaver.

 OLD the hands—her work is done.
Busy hands they were and skilled ;
Throwing shuttle as they willed—
Weaving what they erst had spun.

Now the distaff's tune is sung ;
Reel and loom are quiet too ;
Where the shuttle swiftly flew,
Now a long, black thread is swung.

Did I say her work was done?
Nay, not so. 'Tis only dropped .
Where the shuttle slowed and stopped,
Her new work will have begun.

Death has given larger room
For expansion. In the skies,
Folded yet in sweet surprise,
She is sitting at her loom.

And the distaff's tune is rung,
And the shuttle swiftly flies,
Weaving fabrics for the skies,
While hosannas sweet are sung.

Three Steps in Life.



HE roses climb the garden-wall,
They scent the summer air;
The blue sky leans down over all—
Birds sing without a care;
The flowers reach up toward the sun,
And brighten till the day is done.
O life! thou art so fair.

The shadows lengthen down the walk,
And down my life as well;
I hear but sorrow's moaning talk—
She loves her grief to tell
I scarce do know—I scarce do know
If skies are blue or flowers grow,
Or birds pipe in the dell.

The black night droppeth—hangeth low;
But through the rifts I see
The stars, like beacon fires, to glow
And flash their lights to me.
I know—I know full well some day
The black, dread night will roll away—
The dawning I shall see.

The Visitors.

NGELS three now walk with me,
One on either side;
One, Lenore, she goes before—
She—the last that died.

Folded wings no shadow flings,
Grieving all is done;
While we walk and sweetly talk,
Lo! the sun is gone.

Shimmering gown and shining crown!
I am not afraid;
Holding hands, days fleeting sands
Are run out and paid.

Dipping wings a shadow flings—
Falleth on the heart ;
Each to each do eager reach—
Gaze and sway apart.

While we gaze, I, in amaze,
Caught up in the sky
Angels three that walk with me,
Left alone am I.

In the Streets.



WISH I were dead!
The winds o'er my head,
Are shrieking so madly,
Are laughing so gladly,
It may be they'd sadly
Moan over me dead.

With bare feet and head
I wander the streets,
Shut out from life's sweets,
Drenched through with its sleets—
No home and no bed.

I'm dazed in my head,
I think, with this heat,
In swift, measured beat,
Like treading of feet
On floors made of lead.

I wish I were dead !
With space for a bed,
If space there is any
For me, and the many
Like me, for a penny
Now starving for bread.

What was it I said,
Just there by the shop,
That made the man stop,
And caused him to drop
His hand on my head?

The words that he said
Are burned in my brain,
With clutches of pain,
That bind like a chain
The thoughts in my head.

His lips held the name
Of Christ without shame;
Yet dropped only words
That stabbed deep as swords,
While ever the Lord's
Reprieve us of blame.

If he had but said:
"Poor thing, so bereft
Of joy!" I had slept
To-night and not wept
The hours out instead.

O, God! to be dead!
Am I, as he said,
A Magdalen cursed,
Of honor disbursed,
By misery nursed—
Too vile to be fed?

Am I, as he said,
More dead than the dead,
Where chin-cloths are pinned
Round checks that are thinned,
Tucked warm from the wind
In odorous bed?

God! God of the dead!
I'm not as he said.
I look to Thy sky
With worshipful eye,
And thus face the lie
His base lips have said.

Keep, city, your bread,
Your fire and your hearth!
To-night the new birth
Shall lift me from earth,
Safe, safe with the dead.

Private Finlay of Company C.



YOU may sing of your heroes to East and
to West,
Of Dewey and Sampson and Schley and
the rest;

But the hero of heroes you'll surely agree,
Is plain private Finlay of Company C.

You may *Hobsonize* duty—give each man his due.
Brave Hobson! I'd ne'er take a laurel from
you.

But duty sublime as e'er plucked from the sea
Scored plain private Finlay of Company C.

Around him were dropping a hail-storm of shell,
And the air was ablaze with the demons of hell,
But he never flinched for a moment, not he,
This volunteer private of Company C.

With his horse and his driver both of them
dead,

He harnessed himself to the cart instead;
"This yer stuff must get to the boys," said he,
Our volunteer private of Company C.

And across the open with swinging tread,
He dragged ten cart-loads of shell, 'tis said,
To the boys that were fighting at Malate,
This plain private Finlay of Company C.

You know all the rest. How he turned the
tide,

Of a wavering victory to our side;
As gallant a deed as e'er plucked from the sea,
Scored plain private Finlay of Company C.

Then back o'er the open's shell-swept plain,
With the guns a-thundering at him again—
"I must save these yer wounded boys," said he,
This volunteer private of Company C.

He stooped and picked up two comrades in
pain,
And turned his cart to an ambulance-train.
By the side of our Hobson, who damned up
the sea,
Put plain private Finlay of Company C.

The White-Robed of the Lord.

BLEEDING brows wear richer beauty
Than the scarless ever show;
Human souls grown aged in duty
Stand as white as driven snow.

Tortured lives gain full completeness
From the clinching of the screws;
At the last a rarer sweetness
Will atone the rack's abuse.

Human hearts grow over-tender
In the wine-press' awful gloom;
Catch a more than angel-splendor
That shall light them through the tomb.

Lips, that curse, drop into praying
With the nail-wounds and the gall!
Eyes roll Christward, no words saying,
With the vise-clutch on the ball.

Heads that whiten, truth upholding,
Souls that brave the fire and sword;
Lives that show the furnace-molding,
Are the white-robed of the Lord.

A Life for a Life.



CHILD! I cannot look at you,
For tears that drop like morning dew,
And wet your curls.

So like you are the confined dead
From arching foot to bonny head,
If you but come too suddenly
Within the room, I cannot see,
So blind I grow, and stabbing pain
Like a sharp dagger tears again
My heart. You cannot yet divine
What loss is yours—what woe is mine.
Some trick of voice, or dainty grace
Of tawny hair and oval face;
Some trick of manner, soft and shy
Of arching brow, of grave sweet eye,
Each day unfurls.

O, child of her I loved and lost!
Bequeathed to me at such a cost
Of mortal pain.

I read the wonder in your eyes;
I see the look of pained surprise,
That, like a shadow, comes and goes;
And know you cannot guess the throes
I feel, or that I scarce can bear
Your footstep on the sounding stair;
Or that I shudder when you press
Your lips to mine in soft caress.
And when your hair, a tawny flame
Of splendor, coils, insent to blame,
About my knees, I gasp for breath—
I reel like one astruck with death
Into the air. I cannot pray,
But stretch my pleading hands away
Toward God. And know in His own time
To life's sad croon and faulty rhyme,
I shall grow strong to even bear
Her child to occupy *her* chair
Her child to take the cherished place
Within my heart, of *her* dead face,
And smile again.

Undaunted.



YOU think to stifle the song in my throat?

I sing for the joy of singing;

As easy to fetter the lark's clear note,

That sets the heavens a-ringing.

You think to shut the laugh in my mouth

In orthodoxist fashion?

I laugh for joy of a happy youth,

Undaunted, full of passion.

As easy to bridle the babbling brook,

That cuts the meadow yonder;

Or follow the trail the lightning took

With deafening sense of thunder.

I'll laugh and sing the louder—clearer—
The darker the face of the sky;
The blacker the night the sweeter—dearer—
The sun that rides on high.

I'll laugh and sing my best—my best,
And strive with true endeavor;
For that is the way life's keenest zest
Goes on and on forever.

The Old Year.



BELLS, chime low your rhythmic tune,
Ring sweet and low, as bells of June
Toll masses for a waning moon!

O, wailing winds, sob low—sob low
Across the shining fields of snow!
Ah, God! the night is full of woe!

Shoot, stars, your silver lances, light
Along the footsteps of the night!
And, moon, grow dim—you're all too bright!

O, dear old year! we've loved you so—
We can not bear to have you go—
Ring low, O, bells, ring low—ring low!

And dear, dead year! we've loved you true;
We'll love you still, e'en though the New
Has come to charm our love from you.

We'd love you still though ages dead,
We hold each hair of your gray head
As dear as mothers hold, instead

Of babes God took, a tress of gold,
Or some chance toy—not grown so old,
But causes anguish double-fold.

O, sweet, lost year! We've loved you true,
We'll love you still e'en though the New
Has come to charm our love from you.

The Scroll's Unfolding.

IN God's own time, in God's own way,
The scroll will open life's brief day.

We'll read and know, both I and you,
That God was kinder than we knew.

If winds were rough and skies were gray,
God knew 'twas best for us that way.

If checkered woof was mine and, mayhap,
yours,
The need was ours, the scroll assures.

If sorrow walked with me and joy with you,
God had each soul's best good in view.

If sorrow vigiled with us to the end,
She proved the truest, sweetest friend.

In God's own time, in God's own way,
The scroll will open life's brief day.

We'll read and know, both I and you,
That God was kinder than we knew.

Mount Hood.



WE lift up our faces in worshipful wonder,

We stretch out our hands to you,
meekly and humbly,

In a rapturous silence, helplessly broken

Into fragments of words that never are
spoken—

That drop as the snowflakes, lowly and dumbly.

O, King of Cascade, in your white robes of
ermine!

Can we speak with our ears a-tingling with
thunder?

You are old—you are wise and you shall de-
termine.

If, haply, we did, what good would it do us.

With all sense stricken out from the empty
words

By the cannon of heaven a-rumbling through us?

The earth and the heavens alike are the
Lord's,

And both are alive with a sense of His pres-
ence,

Albeit we never can look at His face.

If, certes, we draw too near to His essence,

We straight are abashed and struck dumb
in our place.

You are old—you are old—and we wonder
truly,

Could you number the years that have piled
their snows

To a stately, white pyramid, adding duly

The terrestrial storms and inward throes

That have beaten such scars in your kingly
face,

Like a veteran warrior's, rugged and brown?
O, King of Cascade! from the height of your
place,

O'ertopping the forests and looking a-down

The valley to seaward, and reaching your
hands

In silent benicite over the town,
A-bloom like a garden of Orient lands—

We but lift up our eyes to your ermined
gown,

We stretch out our hands to you meekly and
humbly,

In a rapturous silence, helplessly broken
Into fragments of words that never are
spoken—

That drop as the snowflakes, lowly and dumbly.

Surprises.

 HERE'LL be some big surprises
When the race of life is up ;
For God will sift disguises
When *He* bestows the cup.

Some Magdalen accursed,
But sorry for her sin,
With hungry eyes, that durst
Not ask to let her in ;
Whom you pass by, alas !
With scorn so deep and still—
May own the biggest palace
On Heaven's *Nob* hill.

There'll be some big surprises
When the race of life is up ;
For God will sift disguises
When he bestows the cup.

Under the Ban.

“Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity.”



WHAT matter the brown eyes are lifted
In a passion of woe to your face;
And the sweet lips are wrenched of
their grace,
While the heavy brown curls are sifted
With blood in the struggle for life?
With seventeen summers of bloom,
This girl with no right of a wife,
Is best with her shame in the tomb.
What matter the fall of her gown
Was chaste as yours is, and her name,
Unawares, was robbed of its crown?
What matter? The curse is the same.

She caught at the sin as is seen,
And sin is no more than the will is;
She chose between roses and lilies,
And strayed in a path over-green.
She plucked at a rose and it pricked
her;

"All roses," she said, "do not wound,"
And tied up the rest, that she picked her,
In posies she threw on the ground.
Then back to the place where the lilies
Stood solemn and fair in the sun,
She walked, and twined of the lilies
A wreath that she, laughing, put on.

But the breath of the roses came faintly:
"O, the roses smell sweeter," she said,
And turned in the rose-path instead,
While the lilies, solemn and saintly,

Were pallid with wonder and pain.
She threw to the roses a kiss,
Which the roses flung back to her twain,
And, sudden, slipped down the abyss
Of passion that girted her in.
The lilies crept off from her head,
Away from the touch of her sin;
And now she is lying here dead.

My Tramp.

S I sit a-rocking
On the oaken floor,
Hist! I hear a knocking
At the lattice-door—
Wide I swing the door.

When a little urchin,
Quaint as quaint can be,
Whom I scarce can urge in—
Scarce as high's my knee,
On the steps I see,

Looking out demurely
From sombrero brim,
And in boots, that surely
Ne'er were made for him—
Just a baby's whim.

Yellow hair a-tangle
Round a dirty face;
Collar, too, a-wrangle,
Not a thing in place
But the roguish face.

I, a frown assuming,
Turn me half aside;
"Sure, there is no room in
Here for tramps to hide—
They outdoors abide."

Hangs the pretty head,
Mouth a-quiver, too;
Blue eyes full of dread,
Dripping briny dew—
Takes a step or two.

Up the yellow head,
Eyes catch hope in this;
“I’se your little Fred—
Don’t you know I is?”
Answer I with kiss.

Claire.



LAIRE, with the rarest of faces—

 Dimpling in shadow and sheen
Set in a tangle of graces

 A Titian might envy, I ween.

Claire, with the brownest of lashes,
 Curling o'er brownest of eyes,
Lighted with lambent flashes—
 Sweet with the shyest surprise.

Claire, that on shadowy eves,
 Broidered the slippers I wear;
Twining the buds and the leaves
 Together with lovingest care.

Claire, that with daintest skill,
Hung on a stem like a thread,
Roses and blue-bells that still
Bloom on a velvety bed,—

Loving remembrance as this
Thus to remember is meet;
Stoop, dear, and take you a kiss,
Thus I am thanking you, sweet.

Like to Thee.

IKE to Thee, O, my Father!
I would be.
Thou, not I, I would rather
Choose for me.

Thou, not I, knowest better
Which is best;
Whether goad or silken fetter—
Toil or rest.

Thou hast walked all the road
I must go!
Borne the ignominious load—
Cross of woe.

Thou wilt lead through the dark
Valley's bed—
Safely anchor each frail bark
Of Thy dead.

Run my life in any mold
Thou seest fit;
Let Thy love so manifold
Fashion it.

Like to Thee, O, my Father!
I would be.
Thou, not I, I would rather
Choose for me.

The Empty Nest.



LINNET built in a cedar-tree

Her nest so snug and tight;

She lined it soft with the thistle's down,

And fastened the twigs so trim and brown;

Though sound of hammer was never heard—

Naught but the twitter of busy bird—

A master builder was she—was she,

No careless, luckless wight.

A linnet sat on a cedar limb

And trilled her joyous lay;

A lullaby-song, for you must know—

[The cricket paused in the grass below,

And the spider stopped his spinning-wheel

To hear the linnet's musical reel—]

A tiny birdlet, neat and trim,

Broke shell at break of day.

A stillness fell on the cedar-tree,
A silence like to death;
We climbed to the nest and then looked in,
But the thistle's down was worn and thin;
A piece of shell and a birdlet's wing
Were all we saw in the empty thing.
" 'Tis ever so in life, you'll see,"
Cried summer's panting breath.

We build *our* nests in the tree of life—
The cedar of life. Ah, me!
We build them strong and we build them wide,
We sing with the best in our boastful pride;
For the nests are filled, as seemeth best,
With little heads and we feel so blest.
Then some fly East and some fly West,
And some (Ah, God! and is that, too, best
With nothing left but an empty nest?)
Soar skyward past the rim of life,
And *now* are safe with Thee.

“If.”

IF one of God's sweet angels came to-night
And called my name,
Could I refuse to follow? Would the
sight,
As I pass by,
Of my young child, who, when the morning
broke,
With wants the same,
Would call his mother, sobbing as he spoke
With fretful cry—
Ah! would it make me falter, knowing this,
And turn aside
Beside his crib to snatch a farewell kiss?
Or would I be
So dazed with that angelic vision sweet
I could but glide
Straight on and on with ever hastening feet,
Intent to see

And meet my Lord, forgetting time and sense
As near I drew?
And if from that far height of recompense
I should look down
Upon the clay, that once had borne my name
And features, too,
Now truly deaf henceforth to praise or blame—
And see the town

A-flocking to the ghastly, whitish room
To gape and note
If mid the snowy mass a crocus bloom
Had been sent in;
Could I restrain the shudder I should feel—
The sob in throat—
Were I alive? And if slow steps should steal—
The face grown thin

And set with grief—across the silent room,
 Throw back the pall
With smothered groan, and lift from out the
 gloom,
 That deeper grew,
Our sweet young child to see his mother's face,
 Then cover all
And stride with sobs from out the gruesome
 place,
 What would I do?

Baby Edna.



DIMPLED atom of grace,
With brown hair shading to gold;
The far-away look on the face
That earth-angels wear, I am told—
And never the azure skies
Could match the blue of her eyes.

Hardly a year from the sky.

We could count the months on our hands;
But the angels missed her on high—

The angel messenger-bands;
And *one* stole in unaware—
“Where’s Edna?” we cried in despair.

I like to look upward and think
That I have *one* angel there;
She is drawing me up by a link
Of her pretty, pale-brown hair.
And always aloft in the skies
I am seeing the blue of her eyes.

The Harbor Lights.*

HREE crimson bars
Twixt banks of lurid gray;
A blood-red disk,
That stooped and sailed away.
Above there hung
An outstretched raven's wing—
At morn a lark
Had pierced the blue to sing.
An old tar gravely shook his head,
“Davy Jones’ll show his teeth,” he said.

Out in the offing the billows are rolling,
Black is the sky that hangs overhead;
Black are the waves whose monotonous tolling
Rings out a dirge for the coffinless dead.

*Read at the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the founding of Monnett Hall, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, O., June, 1903.

“Hark, ye men!” the harbor-master cries,
“Triton is blowing his twisted horn;
Saw ye his heralds ablaze in the skies?
Many a crew will ne’er see the morn.
Davy’s locker’s full o’ gruesome sights.
Swing to their places the harbor lights.

Out in the offing a good ship is riding
Thunderous swells that leap toward the sky;
Landward the breakers are rushing, colliding—
Fierce-wingéd steeds with white manes a-fly.
“Steady, my Hearties!” the captain is saying,
“Never a ship was stauncher or truer.
What does it matter the sea-hounds are baying,
Freed from the leash and bent to undo her?
God holds the reins of the wildest of nights.
See! over there are the harbor lights.”

Out in the offing of life's heaving sea,
Tossed is my bark and her sails rent in twain;
But my Captain—my Captain is saying to me,
"Lo! I am with you," again and again.
Unafraid I keep whispering the words o'er
and o'er,
For my Captain, he knows every foot of
the sea;
And soon he will bring me all safe to the
shore—
The opalline shore of eternity;
Where scintillant as stars on frosty nights,
Gleam heavenly bright the harbor lights.

One Little Maid.



SOFT hair, finely spun
And yellow as gold;
Like tendrils in the sun
Each shimmering fold
Clings fast to your hold.

Eyes—presto! One day
An angel swept by,
Like a meteor's ray
Slipped out of the sky,
And dropped from on high

Two sapphires so rare
Their cost is unknown;
Their worth, *I* declare,
Outvalues a throne—
Victoria's own.

This dear, little sprite
Of sunshine and dew,
In size just a mite—
In years but a few,
Can tyrannize, too.

“Fair Lillian” we call her.
God keep her we pray,
Till, older and taller,
Tired out with life’s play,
She’s had *her* sweet day.

Barbara's Trust.



HE'S an heiress, so they say.
I, a factory girl, each day
Earning bread the self-same way.

She wears silks and laces fine.
Cheaper prints and wools are mine—
Twixt us sharp is drawn the line.

She is fair as lilies be.
I, a nut-brown maid—ah, me!
Very different are we.

Yet he loves *me far* the best;
That I long ago had guessed
Ere his lips and mine had pressed.

But she lures him with her gold—
With her hair of tawny mold,
And her eyes—a siren bold.

I would be ashamed to look
At myself in meadow-brook,
If I flung him, pride forsook,

Such a bold coquettish stare
As *she* gave him, standing there
With the sunlight on her hair.

When I met them in the town,
He with smile and *she* with frown,
Straight my eyelids fluttered down.

For I read a language sweet
In his eyes—a love complete.
She could tramp me 'neath her feet.

But I care not for her gold,
Nor her laces, rare and old,
Nor her beauty, fair and cold.

For he loves *me far* the best.
That I know. As for the rest
He will stand the crucial test.

To Nell.

UT in the world somewhere
There is a place for you;
Laurel, the gods held, to be
Worn, must be worthily won,
Wait for your splendor of hair,
Kissed into flame by the sun-
Breaking in waves like the sea.
Then to yourself be true,
Nell, with the flame-flecked hair!
There is a place for you
Out in the world somewhere.

A Mother's Answer.

OU ask strange questions, dear, to-day—
Why do the babies die?
God wants them, child, some wise men
say,

To catch the tears of pilgrims gray;
To hold the golden vials filled
With prayers of saints, whose blood was
spilled
By wicked men on earth—to swing
The golden censers—chant and sing
Before His throne on high.

And yet methinks, O daughter mine!
A sweeter task is theirs;
Some mothers, wrapped in ermine fine,
Are only drawn by such a line—

A tiny coil of amber thread,
Spun off a darling baby's head—
To climb the golden stairs.

Me thinks the mother heart would break
Did it not feel it so;
They come to us asleep—awake,
Their baby hands in ours we take;
They come to us on shining wings—
We feel their breath—they whisper things
That only mothers know.

Do babies *grow* in heaven? O, Sue!
They surely never will.
Would Robbie be the same to you
Grown tall and big and whiskered, too?
So short and narrow was his bed—
A tea-cup held his tiny head—
He's just *wee* Robbie still.

Do babies grow in heaven? O, child !

I can not think they will.

The mother heart be reconciled
To take, though heaven itself beguiled,
For her babe's life of but a span,
The full-grown stature of a man?
Our babies, grown so wondrous wise,
Taught in the schools of Paradise,
Will be our babies still.

Beware to Part.



WE meet and part and ever dream
That we shall meet the same;
We meet again and each will seem
Another, save in name.

The face and form and very smile
May greet you as of old;
Yet underneath their lurks the while,
A thing of phantom mould.

The eyes meet yours with laughing light,
Yet down their depths of blue,
You trace the phantom's deadly blight,
But think your *own* are true.

The lips may speak with olden spell,
But ah! an undertone
Creeps up to tell the tale as well
In theirs, as in your own.

You lie along the summer grass,
And blame the sweet-faced moon;
You call her but a fickle lass
To change and change so soon.

You think the sky is not so blue,
The flowers are in a swoon;
That friends are all alike untrue,
And birds sing out of tune.

Thus inner grief works outer wrongs,
Which are of your own making;
Which you hold up as poet's songs
To ease your full heart's aching.

O, loving hearts! love on—love on!
Walk hand in hand together,
In meadows burnished with the sun,
Through storm and rainy weather.

Beware to part if once you've met!
Say not "we'll meet again";
Again may come and yet—and yet—
Your meeting will be vain.

If It's Done With a Thought of Him.

IF ever Jesus has need of me,
Somewhere in the fields of sin,
I'll go where the darkest places be,
And let the sunshine in;
I'll be content with the lowliest place
To earth's remotest rim:
I know I'll see His smiling face,
If it's done with a *thought* of Him.

I may not be called to some *great* thing,
That would blazon my name on high,
But only to mend a broken wing,
Till ready again to fly;
Or only to give the cooling drink,
Or sight, when eyes are dim;
It doesn't matter at all, I think,
If it's done with a *thought* of Him.

I'll fill each day with the little things,
As the pressing moments fly;
The tendril, which to the great oak clings,
Grows strong as it climbs on high.
I'll trust my Lord, though I can not see,
Nor e'er let my faith grow dim;
He'll *smile*—and that's *enough* for me—
If it's done with a *thought* of Him.

The Girl I Love.



HERE'S a maiden that I know
With a wild-rose sort of grace,
And shy eyes, the sweetest though,
Ever found in any face.

And she flings her sweetness out
Like wild-roses on the air;
All unconscious of the rout
She is making everywhere.

For the bees, perforce, know best
Where the sweetest flowers grow—
Clover, rose and all the rest,
Grow they high or grow they low.

She is young and she is pure,
And she knows not what to make
Of the homage bold, demure,
That is hers if she will take.

Ah! I wonder whom she'll choose
From her lovers bold, demure!
She can—she can but refuse—
If I only felt quite sure

That the sweet eyes told me truly
When their glance fell under mine,
And the maiden blush unruly—
Jove! Ah! There's that Richard Stine

With her now. Does *he* suppose
For one instant she would choose—
Yet her color comes and goes—
God in Heaven! If I lose—

.

Sky and earth are full of cheer.
Stoop, dear reader, of my lay!
Let me whisper in your ear—
We were married yesterday.

By-Gones.



SIT within the shadow of old dreams;
I hear the cadenced bells ring sweet
and low

From out the charméd isle of Long Ago,
And soft they chime the minors as beseems.

I see the dear old house with shelving eaves,
The wide, low door and quaintly-outlined
rooms;

The orchard drifting clouds of sweet per-
fumes,
As Autumn drifts her tide of crimson leaves:

The shady lane that wound up from the road
Amid old oaks that stood a century old;
The babbling brook that all its secrets told
To fragrant meadows lying freshly mowed:

The tryst, where all the days we sported glad
As any bird that cleaves the buoyant air;
Before our hearts grew old o'ersoon with
care,

And ere life's lessons taught us to be sad.

The patient face beside the nursery door,
That held its calm above our childish touch;
The mother-heart forbearing, loving much,
The quiet step across the tufted floor—

And then the kiss that made our dreams more
sweet,

The low "good-night, my darling," softly said
As prayer above each little curl-toss'd head,
That in our sleep fell soft as angels' feet.

.

I weep within the shadow of old dreams:
I hear the mournful bells toll sad and low
From out the sorrow-laden Long Ago,
And slow they trail the minors as beseems.

Across the fields where daisies love to grow,
She lies grave-locked beyond our sight and
touch!

Ah! mothers, loving wisely, love o'ermuch,
And give us cause to sorrow for them so.

She grew a part of every room and hall,
And, going, left so wide a want behind
That nothing fills. O! others may be kind,
But she was kindest, truest of them all.

The daisy-turf becomes our dearest care,
For sake of her they've coffined fast be-
neath:

The head-stone wears this as a floral wreath,
"Her life was saintly as the breath of prayer."

Sibyl.

 HERE'S sunshine in her burnished hair,
And sunshine in her hazel eyes,
That gleam and gleam unearthly fair—
A far-off look so sweet, so wise.
She lisps in tones that thrill me through,
“Oor Sibyl, mamma dear, 'uvs oo.”

I catch my breath with nameless fear,
I cannot bear that look to see;
A whirr of wings I seem to hear,
And far-off footfalls come to me.
“Sweet one!” I cry, “I can not bear
That angel-look you often wear,”
The smiles and lisps—it thrills me through—
“Oor Sibyl, mamma dear, 'uvs oo.”

O child of sunshine, balm, and dew!

Look earthward with your steadfast eyes;
Life is so sweet while I have you—

See not the angels in the skies.
They'll beckon you away from me,
And that—and that—it *must* not be!
I could not bear no more to hear
Your piping voice, so sweet and clear,
Ring out in tones that thrill me through;
“Oor Sibyl, mamma dear, 'uvs oo.”

Hic Jacet.

(IN MEMORIAM.—L. L.)



IC jacet. The sob is not hushed,
The sod is but freshly up-turned;
The latest-worn garments unbrushed—
Her lesson of living is learned.

Did footfalls come to her ear—
A call that was clear as a bell,
Which earth-senses could not hear?—
Who is wise enough to tell?—

A startled look, like a deer's
When he finds himself entrapped—
Then the wisdom of the seers
The glazing eyes enwrapped.

And now life's lesson is learned.

That smile that was left on her face,
Bespeaks the peace she has earned—
The rest in a larger place.

Hic jacet. Sweet comrade and true!

Sleep on where the violets grow;
Our loss is but gain unto you,
Who knoweth more than the angels know.

A Portrait.

HER white, white shoulders, fine and
smooth as silk,
Up-rose from out a cloud of azure-
gray,
And round the slim column of her neck
there lay
Great ropes of pearls, the tint of uncreamed
milk.
Above, the stately head was goddess-poised,
Piled high with copper-colored braids of
hair,
Lustrous as satin and exceeding fair.
The luring witch'ry of her eyes was noised
A-far and near—brown as coquilla-nuts
And soft as velvet, under lids of snow

Whose curving sweep of amber lashes shuts
In half their sweetness. Like a bended bow
The sweet mouth curved in red lines fine and
thin,
And one deep dimple pricked the rounded
chin.

Laura.



PRETTY eyes,
Heaven's azure ;
Sweetly wise
In a measure.

Forehead wide,
Like a thinker's ;
(Pulls aside
Drowsy winkers.)

Flaxen hair
Softly floating ;
(During prayer
Aptly quoting.)

Little feet
On the stairs,
Making sweet,
Unawares,

All the floor
Where they tread;
(Purling o'er
Pussy's head.)

Marking books,
Cross the pages
With sly looks—
(Two her age is.)

Funny scratches
On the margins;
Striking matches,
Little bargains.

Papa's "besson,"
Mamma's "buty;"
Conning lesson
As a duty.

All your fretting,
Twisting over,
Into petting
What is of her,—

All your scolding
And a-betting,
In her holding
Is forgetting.—

Archly all your
Anger spurning,
Setting all your
Heart a-burning—

This is Laura ;—
God preserve her ;
Given for a
Joy forever.

Sonnets.



The Knight and the Lady.

I.

HE time, Queen Bess' wars with haughty
Spain.

The place, an English noble's country-
seat;

A sylvan nook as cool and shadow-sweet
As forest-pools just after storm of rain.
O'erhead, the sunlight, sifting through a lane
Of leafy grill-work, touched the moss-green
floor

With fretted splendor, while a thrush-song
tore
Along the vibrant air like soul in pain.

Unto Love's tryst a radiant vision swept
In regal robe of rose-pink silk brocade,
With hands gripped o'er her heart, and
 halting tread,
And eyes upraised, nor turned to right nor
 left.
"O, thrush, my thrush!" and here her foot-
 steps stayed,
"Canst sing, and *I*, with heart-break dumb?"
 she said.

II.

"My Lady!" low and sweet as love's caress.

She slowly turned, her lovely face aglow

From slender, milk-white throat to brow of
snow,

And saw a stately knight in rich court-dress

Of violet satin, silver-laced. For stress

Of daring deed, a knight renowned afar,

Yet skilled in gentle dalliance. "O, star

Of all my dreams! Wilt be through war's
duresse.

My Star of Bethlehem? My English rosel"

He doffed his plumed chapeau and bent the
knee.

"Thy faithful knight doth crave thine accolade—

Thy favor for his sword-hilt ere he goes,

To wear as talisman on land and sea,

And e'en in death, if that debt, too, be paid."

III.

With quick intake of breath, she, trembling,
tore

A knot of rose-pink velvet from her dress
And dropped it in his palm; and then
through stress

Of love as pure as any maid's of yore,
She stooped and gave her accolade—a lore
As old as Time and sweet as honey-dew.

“But O, my knight! my heart will break for
you”

With moaning cry. He sprang erect, pressed
sore

With her dire woe, and crushed her to his
heart.

“My own—my only love—my dearest dear!”
He bent and three times kissed the red, red
mouth.

Then speechful silence as when loved ones part
In death. At last with words of dauntless
cheer

He leapt his charger and rode, wind-like,
South.

The Blind Child.

HER hair is like a sheaf of ripened wheat,
Slow-kissed to gold by harvest sun
and moon,
When every lyric songster sings in
tune,
And meadow-brooks trip past with tinkling
feet.

Her eyes—so wonder-wide, so heaven-sweet,
And blue as God's star-pastures are—
His meadow-lands so vast and far,—
Doth burn with eager questioning replete
With sorrow sharper than a dagger's blade.
"Will I be blind in heaven?" with dripping
tears.
"O, Heart's Desire!" I cry with sobbing
words,
"*Up there you'll see* all beauty God has made."
And when dawn tip-toes up the east she
hears
Her lightest step and wakens with the birds.

Daybreak.

DEAR heart, how sweetly thou didst go
away !

The dawn was stepping softly up the
East ;

Her trailing robes of rose and amethyst
Were pinned by one great star, that, burning,
lay

Upon her breast like a fire-opal. Say,
Belovéd, did star-fingers beckon thee ?

Thine iris-lidded eyes slow drew from me
Their steadfast gaze, a-light with that new day
Just breaking on thy gentle spirit's vision—

Straight caught the blazing star that held
them fast

While all thy lovely face shone angel-wise
With that supernal light from fields elysian.

Thou didst not speak, but drifted home at
last,

With that deep smile—the sweetest of good-
byes.

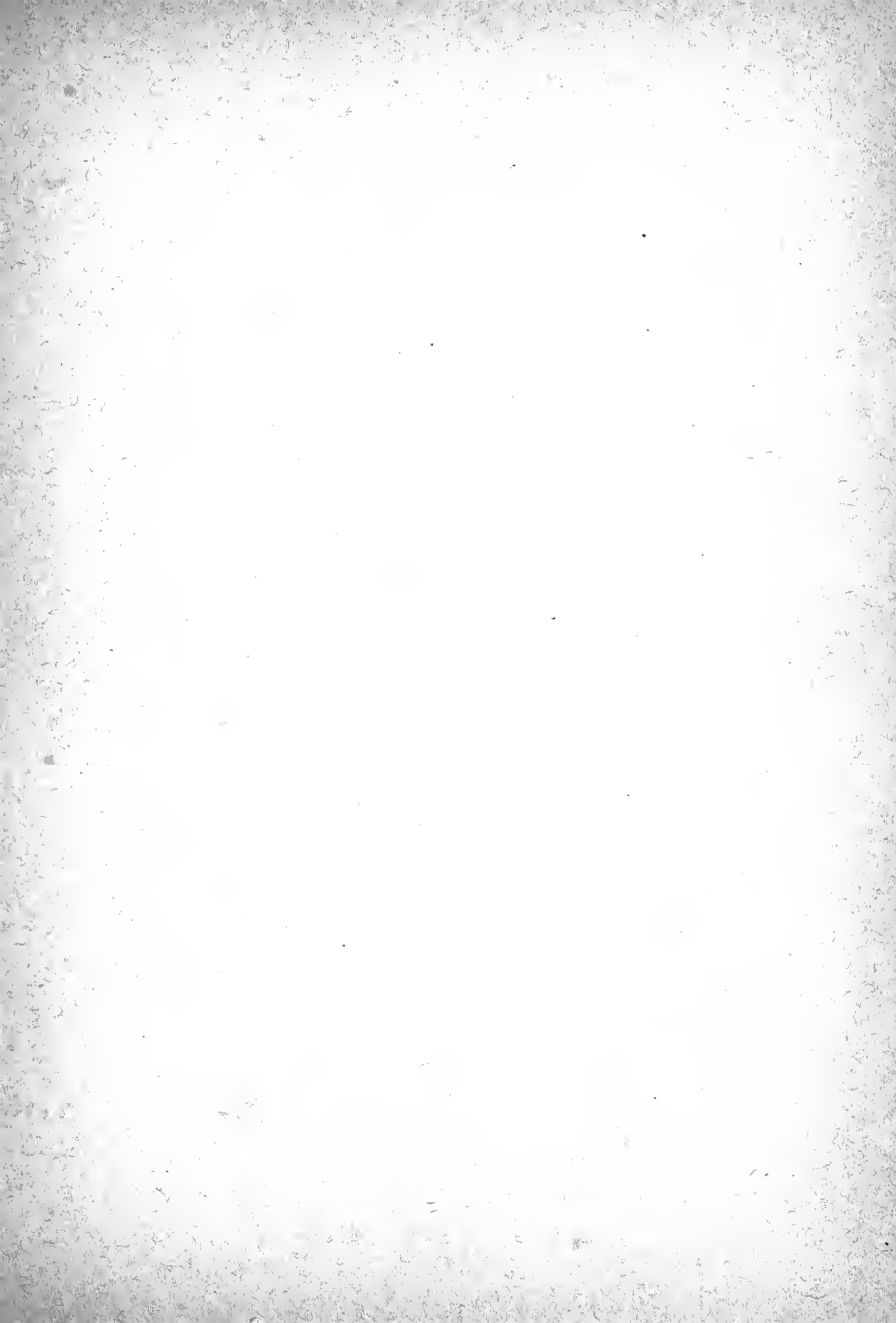
Her Bridal.

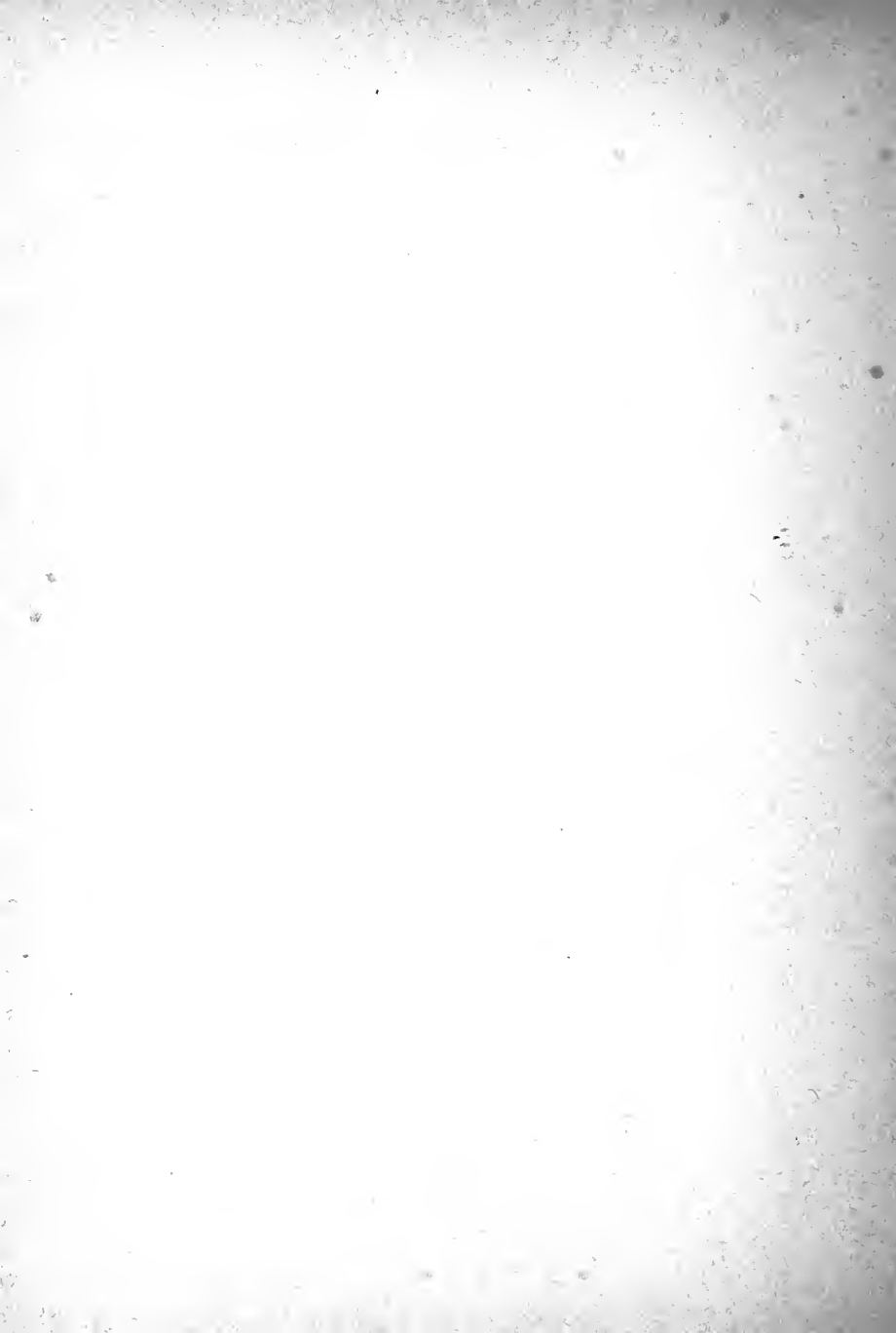
HE slept. And yet it was her bridal
day
Of days. They robed her in her wedding dress

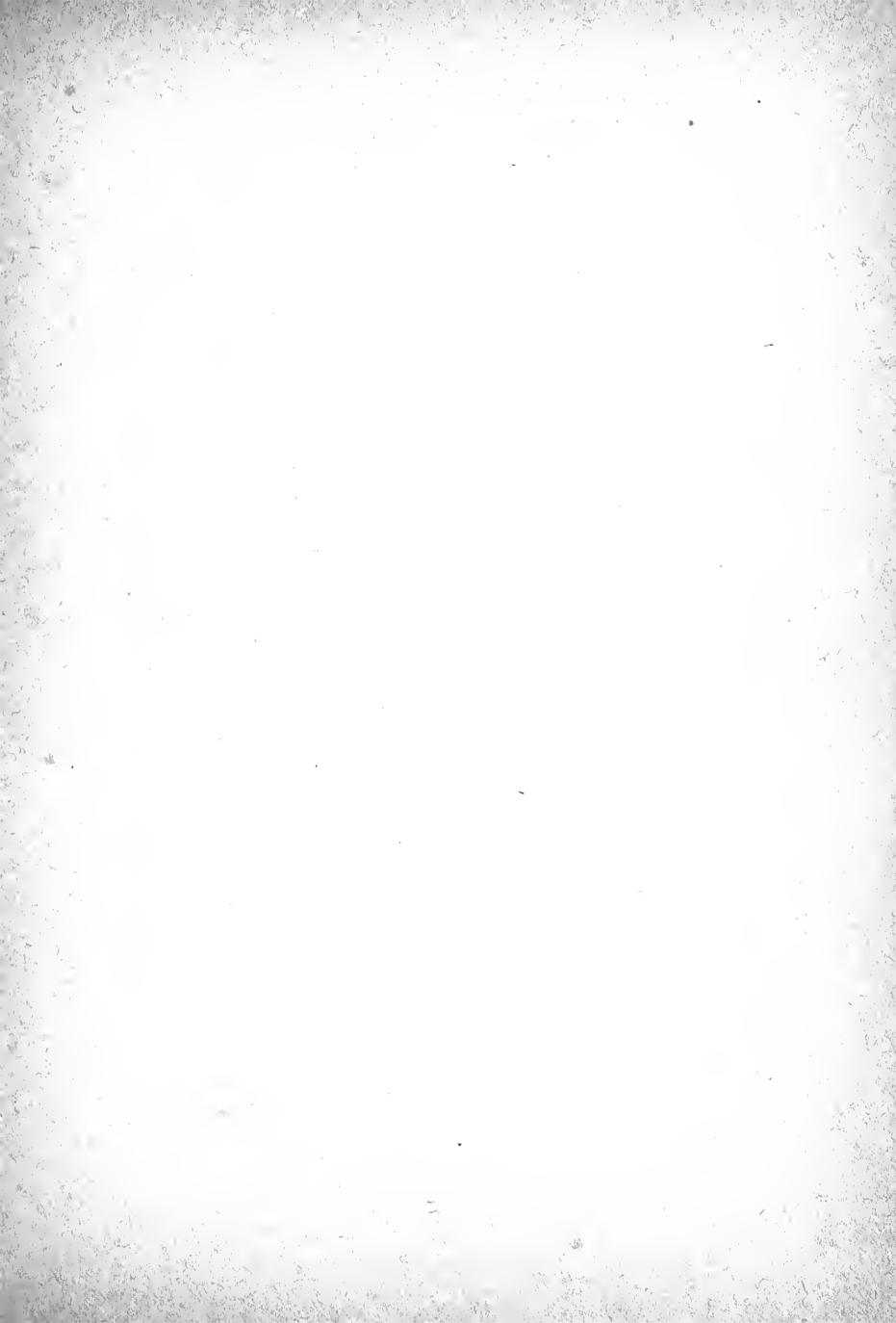
Of frosted silver. Its loveliness
Was like moonlight upon hoar-frost. She lay
So still—her face a little turned away

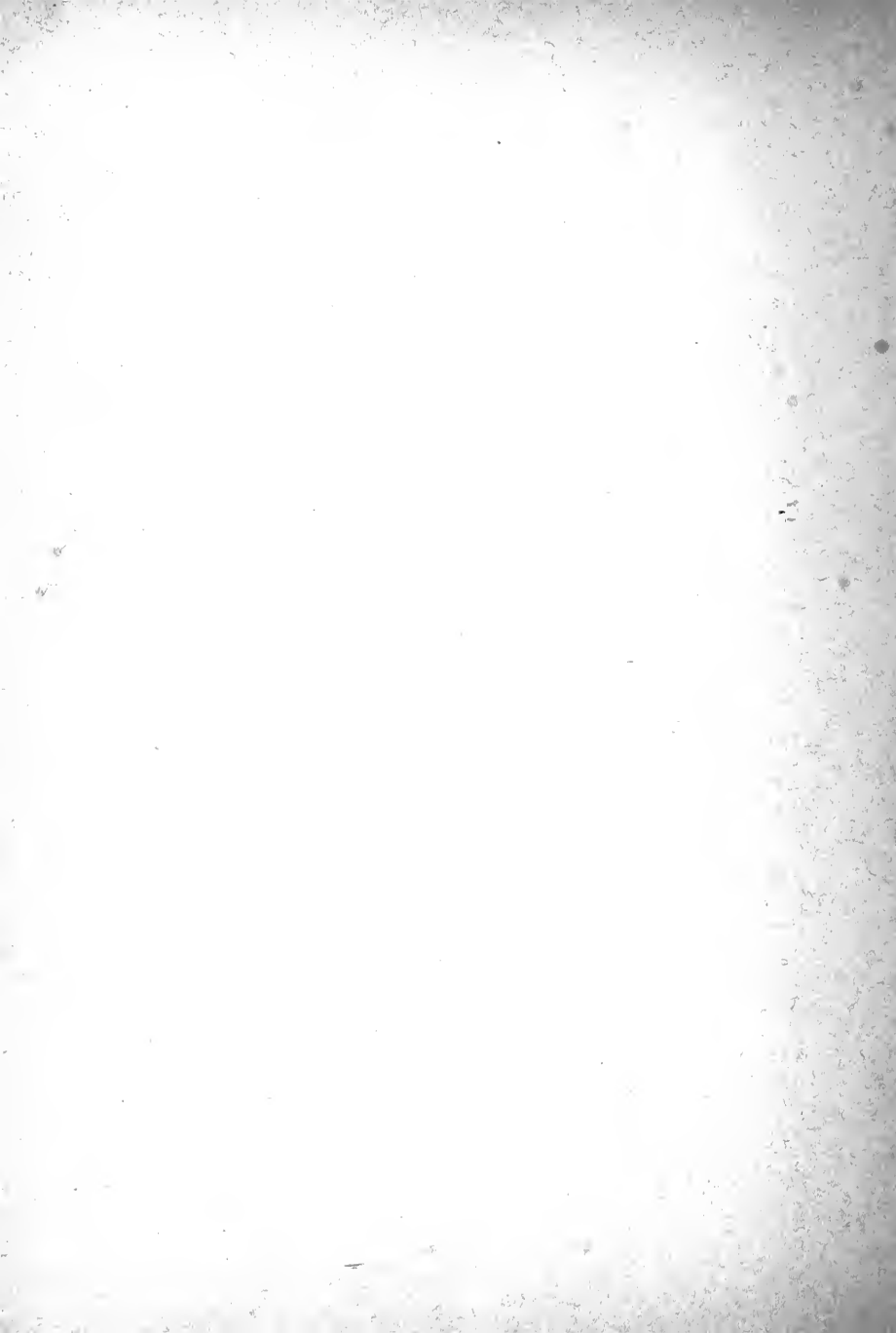
Towards the East; on it a radiance shone
As if she had not walked *that way* alone,
But saw a vision that would last away.
The fast-shut lips a story could unfold,
That's baffled all the wise men of all years;
The secret, that has never yet been told—

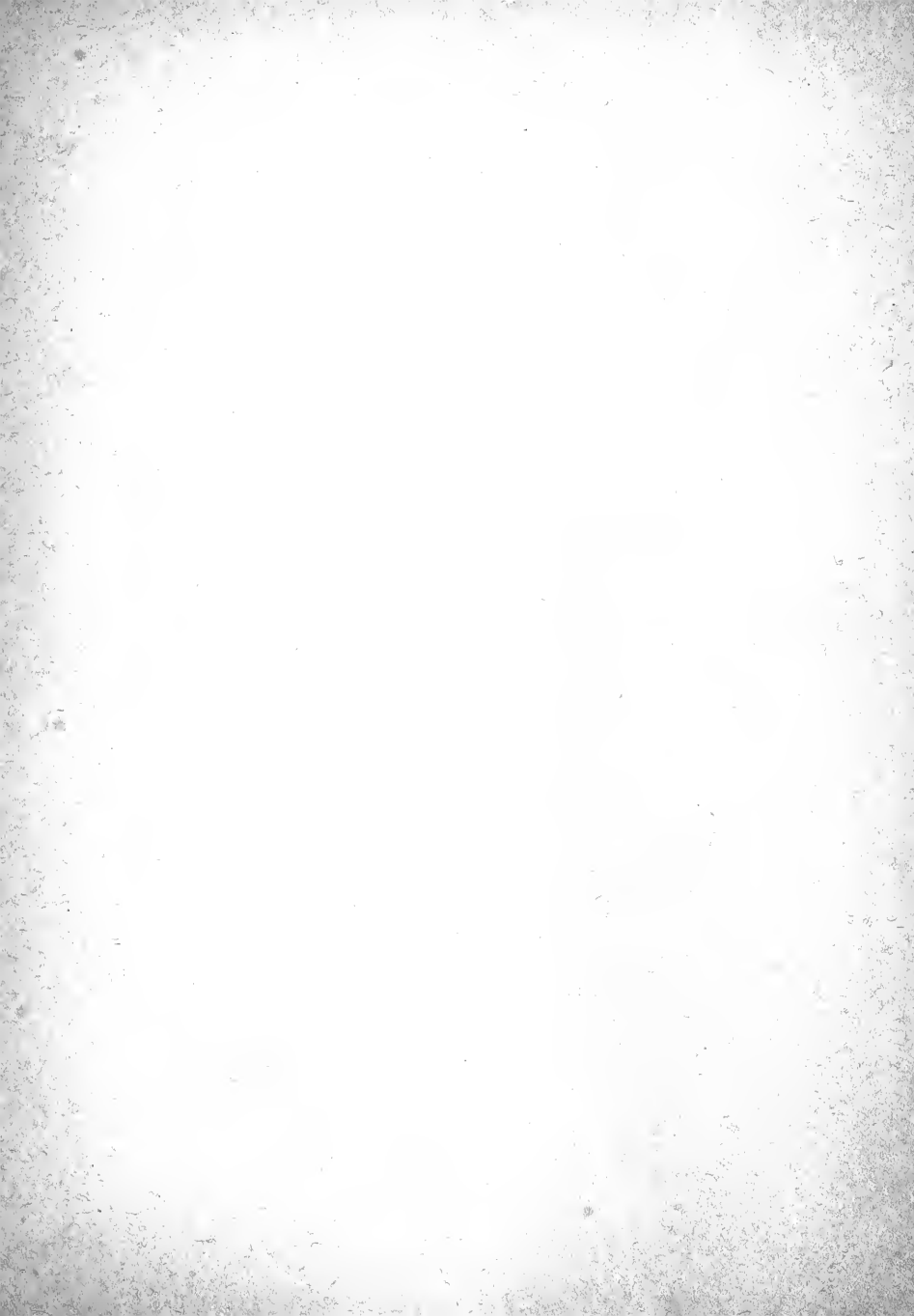
Groped after blindly and with unavailing
tears.
The bride of death. From round her couch
perfume
Of rich and rare exotics filled the room.





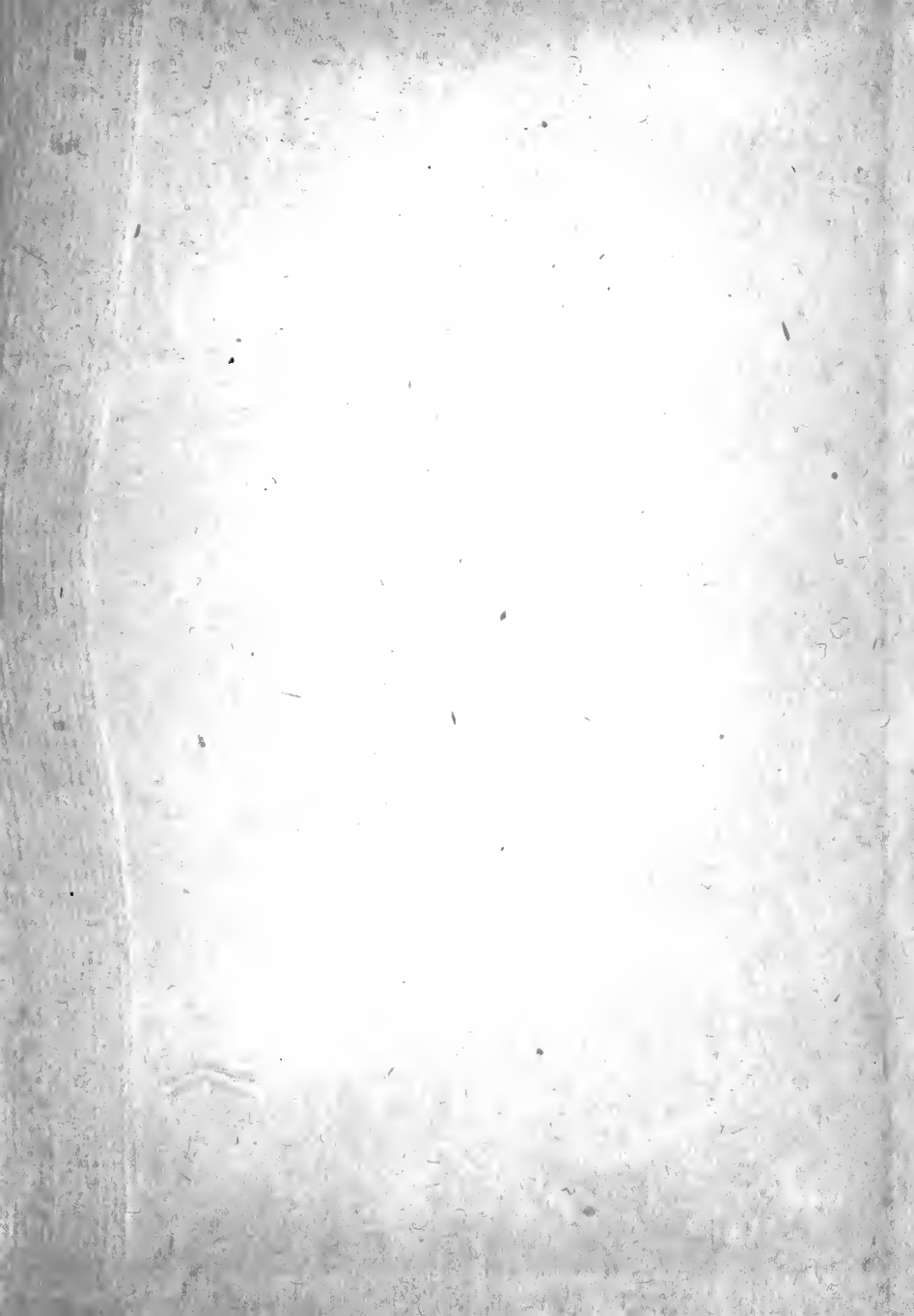








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